

## **Schinnen Safe Rider: General Guidelines For Carrying A Passenger On Your Motorcycle**

Riding a motorcycle with a passenger can have some unique challenges, especially for those who are unfamiliar with this practice. *QUICK TIPS* on specific requirements and common practices are below:

### **Legal / Regulatory Considerations**

1. Passengers must wear the same personal protective equipment required for motorcycle drivers. Additionally, the motorcycle must have passenger footrests installed, and a separate seating area for the passenger.
2. Legal requirement in the Netherlands are that children age 7 years and under will be seated in a child seat designed for motorcycles which must have a foot rest and a back rest. Children age 8 years and up must be able to reach the proper foot rest. Children are not allowed to be sitting in front of the driver.
3. The decision to carry a child, assuming all safety and legal factors have been considered, is left to the parent or guardian. Ensure that the child is mature enough to handle the responsibilities; tall enough to reach the footrests; wears a properly fitted helmet and other protective gear and knows how to hang on.

### **Operational Considerations**

1. Passengers should consider themselves as a second “active” rider so they can help ensure that safety and procedural operations are correctly followed. A passenger will affect the handling characteristics of a motorcycle due to the extra weight and independent motion.
2. A passenger tends to move forward in quick stops and may “bump” your helmet with theirs, so expect it and don't get startled.
3. The extra weight of a passenger may mean that starting from a stop may require more throttle and clutch finesse; braking sooner and/or with greater pressure may be required to stop, and riding on a downgrade will cause braking distance to increase. Motorcycles will vary so “go slow” until you learn your bike's performance characteristics.

### **Motorcycle Preparation**

1. The motorcycle owner's manual should be reviewed for manufacturer's tips about motorcycle setup as well as any related operational recommendations.
2. The motorcycle's suspension and tire pressure may need adjustment.
3. Care should be taken to not exceed the weight limitations specified in the owner's manual.

### **Passenger Preparation**

1. Passengers, same as the driver, should fit the bike properly; be knowledgeable in riding techniques, and mature enough to understand the responsibilities of a passenger.
2. Passengers should never make sudden unexpected moves, extreme shifting of weight left or right, or intentionally remove their feet from foot rests.
3. Always start each ride with a safety briefing discussing passenger responsibilities, hand holds, do's & don'ts and means of inter-communication (voice/hand signals).

### **Motorcycle Training**

If you frequently ride with a passenger, you should complete the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) Experienced Rider Course (ERC) carrying a passenger during skills exercises to enhance your training experience while learning in a controlled environment with Rider Coach present.

Schinnen Safe Riders – Drive to Arrive  
U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen Installation Safety Office